

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

I. Status of the claims

Claims 1-21 are currently amended to correct for informalities and grammatical errors as discussed in the following remarks. Support for the amendments is found throughout the original specification as discussed in detail below. Claims 1-21 are currently pending. No new matter is added by way of this amendment.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's allowability of claims 1-4, if rewritten in appropriate format to overcome the objections and rejections.

II. Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's statement regarding the references in the specification. Applicants submit herewith a supplemental Information Disclosure Statement.

III. Abstract

Applicants have amended the abstract to comply with the requirements as set forth in MPEP § 608.01(b). The newly amended abstract does not exceed 150 words, and all acronyms have been fully defined. Support for the amendments is found in the original abstract as filed. No new matter is added by way of this amendment.

IV. Claim Objections

Claim 1 has been objected to for failure to include the claim numbering. Claim 1 as amended properly recites the claim number.

Claims 5-21 are objected to for incorrect multiple dependencies. In response, applicants have amended the claims to depend from the main base claim, claim 1, and to remove all multiple dependencies.

Based on the amendments noted above, applicants submit that all objections have been overcome. Accordingly, applicants request the objections be withdrawn.

V. Informalities

The Examiner has objected to typographical errors found throughout the specification and the claims. In response, applicants have amended the specification to correct for all typographical errors where appropriate.

Regarding the Examiner's comment that use of "desulphatation" is incorrect, Applicants submit that "desulphatation" is the appropriate term over the Examiner's recommendation of "desulphation". Applicants submit that in the course of the reaction, sulphate (SO_4^{2-}) is removed and not sulphur (S) alone.

Applicants have amended page 4, line 9 of the specification as filed to reflect the appropriate Chinese Patent and patent application number as requested by the Examiner.

Applicants have amended page 16 to recited "We claim" in compliance with MPEP § 608.01(m).

Applicants have also amended claim 1 to include the "muriate of potash" for MOP. Applicants have also added a period at the end of claim 2. Additionally, the preamble of all claims have been amended from "A" to "The" to provide correct dependent claim format. Applicants have also amended claim 3 to provide appropriate Markush group language.

Applicants submit that all informalities as pointed out by the Examiner have been addressed.

VI. Specification

The Examiner has objected to the specification for failure to provide antecedent basis for limitations claimed in claims 2, 3 and 4 per MPEP 608.01 and 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1).

In response, applicants submit that support for amended claim 2, "the bittern of (i) contains effective amounts of K, Mg and SO_4 suitable for kainite production", is found throughout the specification in the description of compounds used in the process of preparing sulphate of potash. Each of the components is referred to in the various examples as individual components or components of a composition. In response to the Examiner's request for clarification and/or appropriate correction, applicants have amended the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 6 to clearly recite that the "bittern contains effective amounts of K, Mg, and SO_4 suitable for the kainite

production". Support for the amendment is found in claim 2 and throughout the specification. No new matter is added by this amendment.

Regarding claim 3, applicants have amended the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 6 to clearly recite the available types of bittern. Applicants have also clarified the paragraph beginning on page 10, line 1 to recite clearly that the bittern used in the invention requires the least evaporation to produce kainite mixed salt, and waste bittern sources including debrominated bittern effluent. Support for the amendment is found in original claim 3 as filed. No new matter is added by this amendment.

Regarding claim 4, applicants submit that the various ranges claimed for KCl, NaCl, MgSO₄, and MgCl₂ are found throughout the examples of the specification. To clearly present the ranges, applicants hereby amend the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 1. Support for this amendment is found in original claim 4 as filed. No new matter is added by this amendment.

In view of the above amendments to the specification, applicants submit that all objections have been addressed. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request all objections be withdrawn.

VII. 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claims 1-4 stand rejected as indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. Specifically, the Examiner has noted that the claims lack antecedent basis. Additionally, the Examiner states that the claims are vague for failing to identify the corresponding reactant/component amounts. The Examiner has provided a number of suggestions to overcome the rejections.

In response, Applicants have amended the claims to remove multiple dependencies. Applicants have also adopted the Examiner's recommendations for corrections to the specification, with the exception of the use of the term "desulphatation" for the reasons discussed above.

Applicants submit that all rejections have been overcome. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all rejections.

VIII. Conclusion

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conversation or supplemental amendment would help advance the prosecution of this case, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney at (212) 527-7735.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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